EDU 221

Spring 2013

Curriculum Instruction Assessment (CIA)

FIAE Reflections – Chapter 4

In Chapter 4, of *Fair Isn’t Always Equal*, the author Rick Wormeli continues his discussion of assessment from Chapter 3. In this chapter, the author details three key types of assessment: portfolios, rubrics, and student self-evaluation. The first assessment type, portfolios, involves cataloguing student work over the course of a year. Portfolios provide teachers, parents, and the students themselves with an overarching view of the students’ performances. As such, portfolios present teachers with a great way to “determine accurate grades in a differentiated classroom” (Wormeli, p43). Rubrics are a grading system in which student achievements are measured through clearly delineated guidelines, based on specific parameters that are dependent upon what is being assessed. Rubrics often come in two types. The first is *analytic*, and the second is *holistic*. The analytic approach allows teachers to gain more subjective feedback on their students, whereas the holistic approach provides more objective feedback.

As a clipboard, one of my favorite features of a rubric is that it provides students with a clear idea of what it expected of them. However, as mentioned by the author, a poorly designed rubric that details the specifics of what is acceptable evidence of learning could lead to students not aiming for more, and simply achieving the bare minimum. Despite any potential draw backs, rubrics seem like a great tool to help assess student achievement. Of the three assessment types suggested, the one that excited me the most was idea of creating student portfolios. I love the description of portfolios being “mirrors” through which students can “see their own development and take charge of their learning” (Wormeli, p43). I would love to incorporate electronic portfolios into my future classroom.